

# VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

[PAYABLE WITHIN FOUR MONTHS]

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1840.

VOL. XII. NO. 26

## VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

BRANDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1840.

The subject of the article below addresses itself to the best feelings of our common nature, as well as to our Christianity. Are there not others who will pursue the subject? I have too many other things on hand, at present, to do it justice. I will give it as my sentiment, here, however—a sentiment which I have long held—that, ordinarily, the church ought to take care of her own poor.

For the Telegraph.

"For ye have the poor always with you." These words were spoken by Him who knew who should people the earth, from the creation of the world to the end of time—our relative duties to each other, our obligation to God, as the giver of every good and perfect gift, and to him as our Redeemer. God is no respecter of persons. All intellectual beings received from him their intellectual powers. He created man in his own image, capable of enjoying all the blessings he has so richly bestowed upon him. Yet in the economy of his providence some are favored with not only the comforts but the luxuries of life; while others who work and toil, when day is done, through misfortune or dire disease, are brought to want. Why this difference, except it be for the exercise of our benevolence, to prove our love, whether it be that which is good will to all men?—Would it not be well to consider, that the Lord has said, "every beast of the forest is mine, and the eagle upon a thousand hills," and that we are placed here as stewards of his goods? Whenever hunger and want call for our benevolence, we should freely give that which we have received, for the support, comfort, and happiness of our fellow beings. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

I learn by reading and other information that many are endeavoring to speak against sin in every shape, and also to indicate the cause of the oppressed. This has been done in behalf of the sable African and the red man of the forest, and various others in afflictions. But amid the wide spreading benevolence of the day, there is one class of the needy which seem to be unthought of, as yet, suffering and want seem to call for our sympathies and assistance. It is those who are necessitated to obtain their support from the town. Perhaps some may say they are provided for and that is enough. But how are they provided for? They are not sold to the highest bidder, to labor for a scanty allowance of food and clothing, such as their masters see fit to provide for them. But they are sick and infirm, and are sold to the lowest bidder, with little thought or care as to their wants or necessities. Sometimes they are compelled to leave their friends and live with the unprincipled and unkind; and in some towns the physician is called by the year, and they are obliged to employ such as are provided for them, without the privilege of choice. Is this right? Have we no duty to do, or nothing to say on this subject? When we see our brethren and sisters in Christ, deprived of their liberty, and choice of society, &c., or any of our fellow beings in suffer without making an effort to meet their suffering, can we expect our neighbor will say, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I am an hungry, and ye gave me meat? &c. I only design to mention the subject, and leave it for the consideration of the wise.

E. H.

For the Vermont Telegraph.

Exposition of Acts xii 13.

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Brother Murray:—Some two or three years since, I was requested by one of the ministerial conferences, to write an exposition of the above verse, which accordingly I did. The conference expressed a desire, (I believe by vote,) that I should furnish my views for the Telegraph. This, I neglected to do, and had nearly forgotten the subject, until lately I received a letter from a young brother in the ministry, requesting my views on this verse, &c. With your permission, therefore, I will present them, in short, thro' the medium of your paper.

The views generally maintained by the Baptists are, that the "twelve" were baptized, as they bring an argument against the baptism being gospel baptism. The Baptists, on the other hand, generally maintain that there was no re-baptism here, but that Paul is speaking of the baptism of John's disciples, or "the people" who heard him preach.

Both of these opinions I consider far from correct and erroneous. Against the views of the Pedobaptists, I remark that the "twelve" were not John's disciples, nor did they ever hear him preach; for, they were more than 600 miles from the scene of John's preaching. This, is only circumstantial proof.

They had never heard of the Holy Ghost; see verse 21. Now we know that the baptism of John's disciples was the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Mat. iii. 11. Luke iii. 16, &c. Hence, if they had been his disciples, they would have known, at least, that there was a Holy Ghost.

It is quite evident that they were not Jews; for the very reason that they were ignorant of the existence of the Holy Ghost. The Old Test-

ment abounds in allusions to the Holy Spirit, and was indited, we are told, 2d Peter, i. 21, by the Holy Ghost. Hence the "twelve" must have been Gentiles, and not Jews, and as John baptized none but Jews, they could not have been John's disciples.

With the views generally held by the Baptists, I have equal difficulty, for 1. That the pronoun, "they," refers to the "twelve," and not to "the people" who heard John preach, is evident from the fact, that Paul laid his hands on "them," &c. Besides, the "twelve" are the subject of discourse, and the 4th verse is merely thrown in to show the difference between John's commission, and that of the ministers of Christ. The plain natural reading would make "they" refer to the "twelve," or the "certain disciples," mentioned in verse 1. But,

2. The apostle must be guilty of egregious tautology, if he meant "they" to refer to "the people." Let us paraphrase the 4th verse. Then said Paul, John, saying to the people, &c. Verily baptized them, &c. Verse 5, and when they heard (i. e. his sayings) they were baptized, &c. This is merely saying in the 4th verse, that John baptized "the people," and in the 5th verse, that "the people" were baptized by John. Such another instance of mere repetition, cannot be found in all the writings of the apostles.

The plain, unsophisticated truth to my mind is this: Apollas, who was doubtless one of John's disciples, had just been preaching at Ephesus—see chap. xviii. 24; and as some believed, he knew from the practice of John, that they should immediately be baptized, and, as he knew nothing of Christ's last commission to baptize in the name of the Trinity, he baptized "unto John's baptism," or as near as he could like John. This he had no right to do, for John had no right, that we know of, to commission any to baptize. But above all, the name of the Trinity being completed by the resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ, none could now receive gospel baptism without being immersed into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which, certainly, had not been done in the case of the "twelve." Hence, Paul would have them understand, that, though they had been baptized, still, not being baptized into the name of Christ, they were not legally baptized. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; i. e. according to his commission; Christ's name being incorporated. Here is a broad sea of dissension, of nonessentialism, ancient or modern. Here is the practice of the apostle, to corroborate the declaration of Tertullian of the 3d century, that "those who are not baptized right, are doubtless, not baptized at all!"

A. A. Hardwick, March 3d, 1840.

## OBITUARY.

Died, in Brandon, Jan. 30th, Mrs. Eunice, wife of Mr. Joseph Whitcomb, aged 53 years. By this instance of mortality, a husband is deprived of an affectionate wife, children of a tender mother, and the Baptist church of one of its most important female members. That Mrs. Whitcomb had faults and imperfections, is not denied; yet it is deeply interesting to contemplate her life, since her connection with the church, which was formed in 1825. She was an understanding Christian, and governed in the discharge of her religious duties, not by present feeling, but by a sense of moral obligation, and by gospel principles. When the church, as a body, has been in a state of declension and shrouded in darkness, her example, in a great degree, has been an exemplification of the power and excellence of religion. Attached to the people of God, and interested in their spiritual prosperity, she not only felt it duty, but esteemed it a most valuable privilege to meet with them when practicable. Nor could she feel justified in idleness when with them. The earnestness of her exhortations, and the fervency of her supplications, will long be remembered by those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing them. Awake to the benevolence and sublime attractions of Jesus Christ, he was the object of her highest adoration and most ardent affection. Impressed with a sense of the incomparable value of the soul, she perseveringly labored and prayed for its salvation.

In her last illness, there was a striking exhibition of the blessed effects of religion upon the soul, in the hour of adversity, pain, and death. Though she experienced some pain, which produced most violent contortions, yet there was seen, in her countenance, that calmness and resignation, which nothing could produce, but faith in Jesus Christ and a prospect of heaven. Not a murmur was permitted to escape from her lips. When her friends conversed with her about dying and leaving them, she seemed to feel, that "for her to live was Christ, but to die was gain."

A few hours before death completed her work of destruction, she was seized with mental derangement, which continued until her death, with only an occasional interval, during which she seemed to be deeply anxious to depart and be with Christ. She had such views of heaven, of God and of his love and benevolence, as made her heart glow with warmer love. About 8 o'clock Thursday evening, she departed this life, exchanging a world of sin, of sorrow, and of death, for a world of holiness, of joy, and of eternal life. The voice to which hundreds, on earth, have listened with profoundest attention and delight, now unites with that of ser-

aphs, who burn around the throne and "hymns of glory sing."

May her afflicted husband, and children and all her relatives, who may read this sketch, copy her worthy example, and carefully regard her instruction and admonitions, especially in improving the means of grace, and in attending to the public worship and ordinances of God, that they may be useful, and that their last end may be like her's. Con. Gratton, March 5, 1840.

## Religious Miscellany.

### THE ARITHMETIC OF LIFE.

Computed by the late Rev. Dr. Nevins.

The theoretical part of the business, the science of numbering our days, is by no means very difficult. It is not hard, with all the facts we have, to come to a correct estimate of human life.

1. Let us add them up and find the sum of them.

The term of human life has been shortened at successive times, until fixed at its present limitation. The days of the years of man were once nearly a thousand years. But God, for reasons not at all honorable to man, viz. because the wickedness of man to plot and execute purposes of mischief, and perhaps to prevent the necessity of a second deluge, cut short his days.

The process of shortening the term of ordinary living was gradual. Noah, with his antediluvian constitution, lived to the period of his fathers 950 years. Shem, who had only the advantage of an antediluvian birth, was cut short perhaps by the climate after the flood, 550 years; 200 years were taken from the lives of his immediate descendants, &c. and the average of the three succeeding generations was about 410.

The next change was in the time of Peleg, who, with his descendants for several generations, lived about 240 years. And so the diminution went gradually on. Terah, the father of Abraham lived 255 years. The three Patriarchs reached the age of about 180. When Israel was passing through the wilderness, the boundary was fixed, at three score years and ten; and now, when we speak of human life in the abstract, this is the amount at which it is reckoned; 70 years; this is the first number in our calculation; the short year is gone seventy times repeated and no more.

I know that when one looks forward from childhood, through youth and manhood, to old age, the term seems long, and the heart is ready to say "it is enough." Hope is in the future, and in the soul's earnest aspiring after it, time seems to move but tardily. The fore-ground is full of goodly prospects, and in the eagerness to enjoy, the space looks long to pass over. But when all that was in prospect has been seen and tasted, and hope has been attained or disappointed, and when the eye, from the other extreme of life, and with eternity full and near before it, casts a retreating look, how short and diminishing appears the distance between this day, and the first remembered day; and who of the aged will not exclaim with good old Jacob? "few have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage?"

But let your seventy years be as much as your imagination can make them. I will not try to make the small numberless. Think the term long if you will. But you have not yet numbered your days. For,

2. In the true arithmetic of life there is a subtraction to be made. There is a great deal of existence which you must not count life. There are the days of infancy of which there is no memory left. There are the hours of sleep, which are as if they were not; those intermediate deaths they may be called, in which we do not so much live as prepare to live; and there are those many days and hours in which, from a great variety of causes, the mind is not fitted for exertion, nor the hand for labor. They must all be deducted. They are nothing in the correct estimate of life, and then how diminished the remainder of the hours of thought and activity, which alone deserve to be called life, is left to you. Greater, far greater are the intervals, than the actual, current life. But we have not made out our estimate yet. We have spoken of the abstract amount. We have been calculating the absolute of human life. But it does not stand unconnected; and let us,

3. Look at it as it stands related to that which shall come after it. We must state the proportion between this life and the life beyond it; and ascertain the ratio of this part to man's entire existence. The terms long and short are relative, and if we would know which of these belong to our life, we must compare our seventy years with the hereafter, eternity. There can be no comparison. There exists no proportion. Who can compute the ratio of the finite to the infinite? Ah, it is in this view that the Bible tells us of life, that it is a vapor, a morning flower, a handbreath, a span, a vanity, a dream, a tale, a nothing. A single grain of sand bears some proportion to the sum of the drifts of the desert, a drop, nay, the least particle of exhaled vapor has a calculable relation to the aggregate waters of the ocean, that has scarcely a sounding or a shore. A moment, the present now, might be multiplied into the life of the earliest made angels, but no multiplication of time can make eternity. This life can be no measure of the life to come;—however long it may be, yet placed beside the line of eternity, it diminishes to a point, and the point itself is lost. What would you think of seventy years, if they

were marked off from some distant point, in the endless futurity? Would you not think that term, as but a little, trifling interval, would you not esteem it as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night, or as a sleep? And why not think the same of that seventy years, which begins the endless series?

But you may be thinking, what is the profit of this calculation, if death does not end nor even interrupt our existence, what if life be as it is represented by us?

4. Hear then another part of the estimate. We have not yet taken into the view the bearing of this life on the life to come. If it were an unconnected quantity, no matter for it. No matter how short and how squandered, if, when gone, it were gone forever and forgotten; if the consequences of time did not survive time itself; if no influence were sent out from it into and through eternity; if life and all its doings were not to pass under the eye and the review of God. But time is to give complexion to eternity. The moments that come and go in such rapid succession and are counted to be no more, are, every one of them, immortal in their consequences. Every moment that God gives to man, shall return at the appointed day and make its report of every deed, and whisper and thought before the judgment throne. Time is to man, in some respects, a more serious season than eternity. Eternity is absolutely the creature of time; derives all its cast and character from time; is troubled or serene, inviting or revolting, a blessing or a curse, as time, omnipotent time ordains it. Life is probationary, immortality retributive. The present is seed time, the future is harvest season. Take this into the estimate. In the numbering of your days, overlook not this most serious consideration.

So then this is the result. We have seventy years given us, diminished indeed by a few deductions, and though nothing in comparison with eternity, yet something in itself, and in this term we are to act for eternity, we are to make or to mar our endless future prospects, and this you suppose is the end of this alarming computation. No.

5. There is one thing more, in the omission of which we should be miserably out in our calculations. It is that which embarrasses the whole proceeding. I have been speaking as if all the items in this numeration were known and certain; but ah, there is one unknown and variable quantity in this arithmetic, and there is no algebraic process by which the value of it can be ascertained. We called it seventy years, but in the tea thousand cases it means nothing like that. It only may mean that, and it may and does also stand for any thing less, down to the infant's first and only moment; and we can never know what it stands for, until it is too late to care for it. This is that baffles us, and there is no rule in arithmetic which will help us out of the difficulty. There is a constant addition of days, but how many yet remain in the hand that tells them off, we have no means of knowing. It is the secret of the Lord, which he never tells, not even to them that fear him. He may have written for ten, or thirty, or fifty years, or he may strike the account to-morrow; or this night, he may break in upon your anticipations and hopes, and say to thee, when thy heart is beating high and strong, "Thou fool, this night thy soul is required of thee. Oh! forget not this unknown number; forget not this uncertainty, this embarrassing, most alarming uncertainty."

And now what is the final result?—Where ends our calculation? What is life? Not the probable life; but the life we are certain of; the life we can calculate upon; the life which we have a right to call ours. It is this, and no more than this; the present, indivisible, irremediable moment added to the moments that are past; and since, in some sense, and for all that is yet to be done, the moments past are as if they had never been, it is this moment only, which you cannot reflect upon, ere it is gone irretrievably, and which, when gone, is past all ransom price to redeem. There was a price in heaven for the soul; but there is none for lost and squandered days. Our days, when numbered, are reduced to this moment, this, and perhaps the next, and as many more as God will. It is now, and the very least which that word ever signifies. You sit unalarmed, ye dying men. I know why. You are thinking that the probabilities are millions to one; that life, to you, is more, much more than I am making it. You are right. I am only contending for the one chance that is against you. I argue but for the possibility. That is enough for me. There is one against you; and oh, it is a dreadful thing to play at a game, when the stake is eternity, at any odds, at any hazard. Great as is the probability of life, it is ever diminishing; and the time will come, when the probability still continuing that you will live, the fact will be that you will die; and that this is not a false or puerile calculation, how often does the alone Arbiter of life make bare his arm to prove upon the man who counted on long years of life and pleasure here. I have finished the calculation.

SALVATION. What news so welcome to the prisoner, as that there is a hand stretched forth to break his chains? What intelligence so cheering to the sick as that the physician has a remedy for his disease? And what tidings so delightful to the startled and trembling sinner, as that

there is One who "shall save his people from their sins?" He shall save us—he shall translate us from misery to happiness; from pollution to purity, from the depths of perdition to the seats of eternal tranquility and joy. He shall save us from our sins—from their guilt, and their terrible dominion from their power in this world, and their penalties in another. He shall save his people from their sins—not the careless or cold, the worldly or the inconsistent; not those who openly submit to the dominion of other lords;—who have a name only to live, and are dead; who say they are his, and do not the things which he says; but those alone who are the faithful sheep of his flock; who "hear his voice," and "follow" it, and who hear not the "voice of strangers." Such individuals may be poor, may be forsaken, may be persecuted; but they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; and when the "day of the Lord shall come," in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, they, like the bush amidst the sacred fire, shall remain unharmed even amidst the elements of destruction. Lord Jesus, may we practically own Thee as this great Deliverer! Save us from the world; save us from the devil; save us from the awful flame which is kindled for the unholly and impenitent; save us from our worst enemy, ourselves.—[Cunningham.]

MISSIONARY GLEANINGS. THE JEWS AND PALESTINE. Dr. Bowring says that he beheld with great emotion the undying love of the Jews for the land of the prophets. Many weary pilgrims had sunk and died with emotion, on visiting the walls of Salem. Many have perished in the pilgrimage from exhaustion.

SANDWICH ISLANDS. Letters from Mr. Armstrong state, that 10,000 children in the islands are capable of reading and profiting by printed Bibles.

RETURN OF THE JEWS. It was the opinion of Dr. Dwight, that the Jews would literally return to Judea, and afterwards be converted to Christianity.

CEYLON MISSION. Mr. Ward thinks that a great change is coming over the minds of the people on the subject of religion. They had read much, and are changing their views perceptibly on important points.

PROSPECTIVE WAR WITH BURMAH. Rev. H. Howard writes, that unless the difficulties between Burmah and Britain are settled in two months, a decisive blow will be struck.

A new church in Calcutta has been recently consecrated for the use of the natives, having a native preacher. It was thronged with Hindus.

ALARM OF THE POPE. A gentleman writing from Rome, states that the Pope Gregory XVI. appears to be much affected by the recent revolt from his authority in Russia. His manifesto on the subject evinces a deep sadness combined with a resolute assertion of authority, and of there being no salvation out of the Roman Catholic church. The Pope may now be considered as committed against slaveholding. We do not see how the Catholics can any longer retain their slaves and at the same time their allegiance to Rome. It will be interesting to observe and see how the matter works.—N. Y. Evangelist.

The Liverpool Gazette states, under the head of Posen, that the number of conversions from Catholicism to Protestantism was never so great as at this moment. "The difficulty as to mixed marriages, is, it says, 'easily eluded.' On the refusal of a Catholic priest to consecrate the marriage of a Catholic with a Protestant, it is only necessary to write a few lines to the Government for its consent, which is never refused, and the first Protestant clergyman can then consecrate the marriage. More than 600 of these consents have been given. In several Catholic communes, the peasantry, with the Mayor at their head, are reported to have demanded of the authority if they may not refuse obedience to the priests, who object to the ringing of the church bells, and refuse to perform their spiritual duties. They think that, in such circumstances, they would be justified in refusing on their part to pay the mass-tithe. The Government, however, has exhorted them to obedience.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND seem to be striving in a conflict for infamy. One compels the king of the Sandwich Islands to permit the introduction of brandy into his dominions, and the other obliges the Chinese to traffic in opium. Both employ their superior power to accomplish these foul purposes, contrary to the will of the Government of these countries, and gain their point at the cannon's mouth.

What will the heathen say to such religion; and how long before the world will be converted, when those engaged in the work, have such obstacles as these with which to contend?—Zion's Herald.

Jefferson and the Baptists. And why should not our spirit and mode of action be in harmony with the clear-sighted republicanism of America? Republicanism was first evolved in the church, and its fruits practically exhibited there, before it was carried out in that system of political order which is now the admiration of the world. Mr. Jefferson, the philanthropic statesman of America, acknowledged himself indebted to the

church for the model of the republic. Several years before the revolution, he attended the meetings of a Baptist church near his residence, and was observed to be deeply interested in its proceedings. On being asked what he thought of the method of government, he replied, that he much admired it as the most purely republican, and the best adapted to secure the rights of all, which he had ever seen. How far his observations and reflections there, assisted him in forming that comprehensive and lucid statement, of human rights contained in the Declaration of Independence, the world may never understand.—Christian Watchman.

AWAKENING CONSIDERATIONS.—Reader! remember how short and uncertain thy being in the world is; our life is but a vapor, that soon appeareth and disappeareth, dispersed as soon as raised. James iv. 14. 'Tis a little spot of time between two eternities. One of the ancients doubted whether he should call it a dying life or a living death. Add it our life, which is a breathing death, had been less than a vapor, it had been nothing at all. The Psalmist describes man as grass. "In the morning it flourisheth—in the evening it is cut down and withereth." Ps. xc. Man continueth but a short time, his life is but a span long, like Jonah's gourd, which came up in a night and perished in a night. The first step a man sets upon the stage of this world, he is going out of the world. Naturalists speak of a fly which they call ephemeron, a creature of one day; it cometh forth in the morning, and is very active about noon, but when the sun declineth it declineth also, and sets with the sun.—Man is an ephemeron, a creature of one day. The Ancient of Days sets up one glass in heaven there it is running, and we see not how it hastens to an end.—Think, O devout soul, of the swiftness of thy time here below, how fast it flies; the line and lease of life will quickly be out. It is but a point of time we live, for which we do but turn, immortality is present.—This present life is but the place of our inn and sepulchre; the beginning of this life is but the approach to death. We are carried every moment of time to the end of time. Human life may be compared to one sailing on the waters; he who sails, whether he stand or sit, watch or walk, is carried nearer the port.

THE TESTIMONY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.—I know that many have frequently complained, and do still loudly complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments. I cannot deny but that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but I still kept this one thing in view, that if possible I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth, so boldly, and without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called and of his grace appointed me to be a steward of divine mysteries, and a belief that he will demand an account of the manner in which I have discharged the trust committed to me, when I shall at last stand before his tribunal.

I profess, therefore, before God and before his holy angels, that I never made merchandise of the sacred Word of God, never studied to please men, never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talents intrusted to me for the edification of the church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me, respecting this point, I rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience.—John Knox on his death-bed.

TRUTH THAT BECAME A SAVIOR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH.—This text was most affectingly illustrated in the summer of 1838, in the following manner. The writer was led to a specification of some of the prominent sins of the day, and their effect in withholding the blessing of God was clearly shown.

Among the sins enumerated was that of intemperance. This was exhibited as a giant sin, and its effects as unmix'd evil. It creates an unnatural appetite which can never be satisfied—lights up a quenchless flame upon the human countenance—deranges the operation of all the vital organs—creates habits of idleness and dissipation—is a wasteful and wicked expenditure of money, reducing families to poverty, if not to starvation—and at last, the grave closes from mortal vision the loathed carcass of the drunkard, and the prison-house of the universe confines the immortal spirit in endless despair.

A man somewhat past middle life, was present, who though not a drunkard, according to the vocabulary of that period, was nevertheless, intemperate; and there were fearful forebodings in the family, friends, and neighbors, that the world soon be a sot. The truth very much disturbed him, his wrath was excited, and at the close of the services, he vented his rage in the language taught in the grog-shop, and spoke with dreadful imprecations about being "twisted in the pulpit."

This was uttered in a tone so loud as to be heard nearly or quite through the house. Boiling with anger, he left the place of worship, and returned to his family; but God had said, "He is joined to his idols, let him alone." His subsequent conduct in his family and abroad, was that of the madman who scattered fire.